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William J. Kerr

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Agriculture in the Agricultural College of Utah

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A G R I C U L T U R E

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A G R I C U L T U R A L C O L L E G E O F U T A H.

The following indicates the policy which has been pursued at the Agricultural College of Utah during the past seven years in promoting the development of agricultural education in that institution:

Conditions at the College as late as 1900 are shown by the following statement, taken from the biennial report of Prof. L. A. Merrill, who had charge of the work in Agronomy and Veterinary Science, to the President of the College, December, 1900:

"Although it has now been more than ten years since the College was organized, the Department of Agriculture has never had a permanent class room, and as yet no laboratory equipment has been provided."

President Kerr, in his biennial report to the Board of Trustees, dated January 5, 1901, says:

"In view of the great agricultural interests of the State, and the importance of the work of the agricultural school of the College, the above estimates of the requirements for additional equipment during the next two years are not excessive. One of the leading objects in view in establishing agricultural colleges in the different states of the Union was to improve the condition of the farming classes, by providing facilities for work in scientific agriculture and related subjects.

"...To provide adequately for this work there should be permanent provision made for a class room for each of the departments; a laboratory for the work in soil physics and agricultural mechanics, provided with the different kinds of material used in illustrating the subjects taught; model farm buildings with the different kinds of animals required; and all other incidental material necessary to thorough, successful, modern work in the various lines of scientific agriculture.

"It is true that, according to the register of students, the attendance upon the agricultural courses has not been so large as in some other departments; but this is no doubt due largely if not entirely to the meager facilities for the work in agriculture. We cannot expect students in this department until we are prepared with the necessary facilities to give them the very best instruction possible in the particular lines in which they have interest.

"It is hardly possible to overestimate the good that will come to the State from scientific training of these students in the subjects affecting the leading industry

of the people." (These extracts and additional information on the same subject may be found on pages 18, 19, 20, and 21 of the Biennial Report of the Board of Trustees for 1899, 1900)

In his report to the President, Jan. 26, 1902, Prof. Merrill says:

"I wish at this time to express my appreciation of your efforts in providing this Department with suitable and convenient quarters. We now have, for the first time, an excellent class room, a laboratory, museum and store room, each of which is well adapted to its purpose. Although these rooms are in the basement, they are well lighted and heated and ideal in every respect.

"The laboratory equipment, recently purchased, has been found satisfactory and it is a matter of congratulation that this Department is provided with means by which students can demonstrate many of the facts and principles upon which the theory of the class room is based. It is a matter worthy of note that this institution is the sixth among all of the agricultural colleges of the United States to furnish an equipment of this kind.

"It can be safely asserted that there never was a time in the eleven years history of this institution, when the interest in the general work of agriculture was so great as it is today. It is a source of pleasure that a change in sentiment in regard to agricultural education is taking place. Without the hearty cooperation with which you have aided the work of this Department, the progress which it has made during the past year would not have been possible."

"Again, in his biennial report to the President, in December, 1902, Prof. Merrill says:

"Through the liberal support you have given this department and the generosity of the last Legislature the equipment of this department is now very satisfactory. Indeed there are not more than five agricultural colleges in the United States that have a laboratory equipped for agricultural work that begins to equal the equipment of this institution."

F. B. Linfield, Professor of Animal and Dairy Husbandry, makes the following statement in his biennial report, December, 1902:

"The new farm buildings, the pure-bred stock, improvements in the dairy, and other general equipment provided during the past two years make the facilities for instruction much better than ever before in the history of the institution. The changes in the courses of study have resulted in great improvement in the work. As a result of these improvements the students are taking a more active interest in the agricultural work."

The following extract is taken from the President's Biennial Report for 1901, 1902:

"The importance of the farm buildings and the pure-bred stock required in the work of the College and Station, was discussed at considerable length two years ago. Since the necessity for additions was recognized at that time it is not thought necessary to encumber this report with a repetition of what was said then. It is urged, however, that the necessary appropriation be made for the completion of the sheep and cattle barns, for the construction of the piggery, and for the purchase of the pure-bred animals required." (See pages 22 to 28 of the Biennial Report of the Board of Trustees for 1901, 1902)

In Prof. Merrill's report to the President, dated March 23, 1903, is the following statement:

"During the past year much has been accomplished in getting the department of Agronomy and Veterinary Science on a satisfactory basis. The equipment of the agricultural laboratory has enabled us to do better work in Agronomy than heretofore, and the gratifying increase in the number of students enrolled in this department verifies the prediction you made two years ago that 'if we provide the equipment, we shall have no difficulty in securing the students.' ...

"In conclusion, I desire to express my personal appreciation for the cordial and helpful support you have given this department."

On page 25 of the President's biennial report to the Board of Trustees for 1903, 1904, occurs the following:

"It will be necessary to extend the work along certain lines of Agriculture during the next two years. Courses should be offered in agricultural mechanics, and additional courses provided for in horticulture. The importance to the state of Veterinary Science demands that more attention be given to this subject.

"...There has been a large increase in the enrollment of students in the agricultural courses during recent years, and a great improvement in the character of the work done. Much greater interest is taken in this work than ever before, and the prospects are that the increase in attendance during the next two years will be greater than during the past. This will increase the amount of instruction and make imperative the demand for more room and equipment." (See also pages 25 to 28 of the Biennial Report of the Board of Trustees for 1903, 1904)

Prof. R. W. Clark, of the Department of Animal Industry, in his biennial report for 1903, 1904, says:

"The Department of Animal Industry, along with other departments, has made material growth during the past two years. The attendance of classes has been increased, making in one instance their division into sections necessary. With the new barns, pure-bred stock, improvements in the

creamery, and other general equipment, greater interest is being taken by the students in the work, with a consequent increase in the quality of the work done."

In his biennial report to the President, December 7, 1904, Prof. Merrill says:

"In closing, permit me to express my appreciation of your cordial encouragement to this department. To the support you have given us and to your recognition of the importance of scientific instruction in Agriculture is largely due the healthy growth of the School."

Prof. W. M. Jardine, in his biennial report, December, 1906, says:

"During the past summer, it was the writer's privilege to visit some of the leading agricultural schools of the country. In most instances I was agreeably surprised to learn that the grade of work being done here compares favorably with similar work of the leading agricultural colleges of the country. In recognition of this fact, graduate students in Agriculture from this institution, desiring to take post-graduate work in the leading agricultural colleges, such as those of New York, Illinois, and Iowa, will be given full credit for work done here."

(NOTE. Prof. Linfield was Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Faculty in Agriculture from 1901 to 1903; Prof. Merrill was Chairman of the same Committee from 1903 to 1905; and Prof. Jardine was Chairman from 1905 to 1907.)

The distribution of funds by the Board of Trustees among the technical schools of the College during the past six years is shown on page 46 of the Biennial Report of the Board of Trustees for 1905, 1906.

Additional information regarding the Agricultural work at the College during the past two years may be found in the same report, as follows: Pages 24 to 36 and 43 to 47, in the President's report; and pages 55 to 80, in the Reports of the Departments of Instruction.